

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01
/087 W

-----112880 061224Z /53

P R 061135Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5595
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT ELAB PINS CG
SUBJECT: MOBUTU ADDRESS OPENS ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN AND DISCUSSES
NGUZA AFFAIR

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ON SEPTEMBER 4 PRESIDENT MOBUTU SPOKE TO
REASONABLY LARGE AND RESPONSIVE CROWD AT STADIUM. THE SPEECH,
PUBLICIZED AS THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN,
MARKED THE TRANSITION FROM PERIOD OF NOMINATIONS TO ACTIVE
CAMPAIGNING. MOBUTU DEALT WITH FOUR MAIN SUBJECTS IN HIS ADDRESS:
A) HE ASSERTED THAT ELECTION CAMPAIGN WILL BE DEMOCRATIC AND FREE
BUT WARNED AGAINST EXCESSES, B) HE JUSTIFIED HIS OWN INTENTIONS TO
REMAIN IN POWER BY DESCRIBING HIS GOVERNMENT'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS,
C) HE CONDEMNED RECENT LABOR AGITATION, AND D) HE REITERATED
CHARGES AGAINST NGUZA AND STATED THAT FORMER FORMINISTER WILL BE
GIVEN PUBLIC TRIAL. END SUMMARY.

2. MOBUTU'S SPEECH FORMALLY INITIATED THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN
WHICH WILL LEAD TO ELECTIONS ON THREE SUCCESSIVE WEEKENDS IN OCTO-
BER. HE BEGAN BY ADDRESSING THE DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS NOW UNDER-
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WAY. MOBUTU INVITED THE PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE FULLY AND URGED THEM
TO VOTE WISELY. HE PROMISED HIS AUDIENCE THAT HE WOULD NOT TAKE
ACTION AGAINST THOSE WHO SPEAK OUT DURING THE CAMPAIGN. THE PRESI-
DENT ADDED THE CAVEAT, HOWEVER, THAT ALL CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES MUST
BE TAKEN WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE "GREAT FAMILY OF THE MPR"
POLITICAL PARTY.

3. ASSURING HIS LISTENERS THAT HE LIKES HIS JOB, MOBUTU SAID THAT HE INTENDS TO STAND FOR RE-ELECTION WHEN THE MPR CONGRESS MEETS IN NOVEMBER TO CHOOSE ITS CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENCY.

4. TURNING TO ECONOMIC ISSUES, MOBUTU LAUNCHED INTO A POINTED CONDEMNATION OF THE RECENT STRIKES. BY CHARACTERIZING THEM AS "ECONOMIC SABOTAGE", MOBUTU PUT BOTH WORKERS AND THEIR SHOP STEWARDS (I.E., THE UNTZA DELEGATES) ON NOTICE THAT HE WOULD NOT TOLERATE EXCESSES IN AREA OF LABOR AGITATION.

5. MOBUTU ENDED HIS SPEECH WITH EXTENDED COMMENTARY ON THE ARREST OF FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER NGUZA KARL I BOND. MOBUTU REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES THAT THE FOREIGN PRESS HAD DESCRIBED NGUZA AS HIS POTENTIAL SUCCESSOR. THIS, HE EMPHASIZED, WAS NOT CORRECT. WARNING TO HIS SUBJECT, THE PRESIDENT CHARGED THAT NGUZA HAD FAILED HIM SEVERAL TIMES AND HAD BEEN FORGIVEN. HOWEVER, THE SHABA BETRAYAL, SPECIFICALLY HIS FAILURE TO PASS ON TO MOBUTU KIBWE'S WARNING OF THE IMPENDING INVASION AND HIS SECRET MEETING WITH TSHILENGE, COULD NOT BE FORGIVEN. IN AN APPARENT ATTEMPT TO SMEAR NGUZA, MOBUTU DESCRIBED IN SOME DETAIL ALLEGED SEXUAL PECCADILLOS OF THE FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER. MOBUTU SEEMED INTENT ON ESTABLISHING THE IMAGE OF A LONG-SUFFERING PRESIDENT WHO FINALLY HAD HAD ENOUGH. AFTER DEALING WITH NGUZA'S ALLEGED SINS, MOBUTU WENT ON TO ASSURE HIS AUDIENCE THAT NGUZA WOULD HAVE A PUBLIC TRIAL WHICH WOULD BE CARRIED ON RADIO AND TV. MOREOVER, HE INVITED HIS FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER TO BRING "30 OR 50" LAWYERS FROM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ABROAD TO CONDUCT HIS DEFENSE IF HE DESIRED TO DO SO.

6. COMMENT: WHAT WAS BILLED AS ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF TURNED INTO ONE OF MOBUTU'S TYPICAL "DIALOGUES" IN WHICH HE ROAMED OVER A NUMBER OF CURRENT ISSUES. MOBUTU WAS IN GOOD FORM, AND THE CROWD, WHICH ALMOST FILLED THE STADIUM ON A SUNDAY MORNING, RESPONDED REASONABLY WELL. HIS WORDS ABOUT DEMOCRATIZATION WERE CAREFULLY BALANCED BY WARNINGS AGAINST PUSHING DEMOCRACY TO THE POINT WHERE IT BECOMES TREASON. FACT THAT MOBUTU DWELT SO LONG AND IN SUCH TOUGH TERMS ON NGUZA'S CASE MAY HAVE REFLECTED CONCERN THAT ASSURANCES OF FAIR, PUBLIC TRIAL NOT BE INTERPRETED AS BACKING AWAY FROM ORIGINAL CHARGES. ZAIRIAN PRESS SEPTEMBER 6 ANNOUNCED THAT PUBLIC TRIAL OF NGUZA WILL BEGIN ON SEPTEMBER 10.

CUTLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 06-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977KINSHA08469
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770321-1168
Format: TEL
From: KINSHASA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770996/aaaadcrw.tel
Line Count: 118
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9e20784d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1380709
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MOBUTU ADDRESS OPENS ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN AND DISCUSSES NGUZA AFFAIR
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, PINS, CG, (MOBUTU SESE SEKO), (NGUZA KARL-I-BOND)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9e20784d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009